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# THE PUBLIC DINNER AT AMHERST.

## HON. MR. HOWE'S SPEECH.

On Wednesday, the 29th day of June, about 400 of the friends and constituents of the Hon. the Provincial Secretary and of his colleague Stephen Fulton, Esq., assembled at Treen's Hotel to entertain them at a public dinner.—James S. Morse, Esq., presided. The building in which the Company assembled is a recent erection, and far exceeds in dimensions any similar structure in the Province, outside of the City of Halifax. At 5 o'clock the company sat down to dinner, in a large room covering the whole area of the Hotel. About 230 persons were present, comprising representatives from nearly every section of the county, and men of weight and influence from all quarters. Two other rooms were crowded, and the whole number who came to the festival is supposed to have been nearly 400. The dinner was substantial and abundant, as became the occasion and the county. When the cloth was removed

Mr. Morse rose and said—that among a company of Cumberland Liberals there was one toast which was sure to be drank with enthusiasm, and he gave

THE QUEEN:

which was received with all the honours. I give you now, said Mr. Morse, and from all that I know or have heard of His Excellency and of his amiable family, I do it with sincere pleasure, the health of

THE LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR:

of whom I will say nothing more, for I have no desire to mix his name unfairly with our party celebrations, than that, as he has a fondness for farmers and rural pursuits, I hope that we shall yet have the pleasure of seeing His Excellency in Cumberland.

This toast having been received with every mark of respect, and followed by three rattling cheers, Mr. Morse again rose, and said, that from the spontaneous outpouring of the host which sat before him, and from the numbers who crowded the rooms below, whose faces he could not see, but whose spirit and numbers he could form some conception of, from what he heard; it was quite evident that he need waste no time in idle compliments to the gentleman whose health he was about to give. The Hon. Provincial Secretary had rendered services to his country which his country would never forget. He had stood, for years, storms which would have prostrated any other public man; and yet, the harder it blew the firmer he stood in the confidence and affections of the people. He had been assailed ever since the Poll closed in Amherst sixteen months ago, with every slander which the malice of his enemies could invent—but what, he asked, was the answer given by the county of Cumberland? The noble demonstration at which he was happy to preside. He would therefore give, without further preface, the health of

JOSEPH HOWE.

When the cheers which the toast elicited had died away, Mr. Howe rose to reply, but was requested to pause a moment until some mode should be devised by which all his friends could hear.—At first it was proposed that the tables and furniture should be removed to secure space, but this idea was abandoned, from the great numbers below. It was finally proposed to erect a platform in front of the hotel, which was done in a few moments. The Chairman having taken his seat upon it, and the people having formed in a compact mass around, Mr. Howe rose and addressed them for about three hours, only interrupted by roars of laughter or bursts of indignation, as he unravelled a web of falsehood by some simple explanation, or made merry with the unprincipled scamps who had been barking at his heels.

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen:

Summoned into the county of Cumberland as a witness, in the Libel causes recently pending, I neither expected nor desired a personal or political demonstration. While the Court was sitting I declined to countenance any movement which might disturb the calmness of judicial investigation; but when the term had blown up, like the boiler of an old steam engine, I could no longer resist the wishes of my friends, and cheerfully consented to attend the festive scene by which I have just been honoured. Such a testimonial of your undiminished confidence and personal regard makes my heart swell with gratitude and pride. A year of toil and solicitude has passed since I visited the county, and sixteen months have been employed by my enemies in slander and defamation since I raised my voice within it in self defence. I need not raise it now. The yeomanry of Cumberland have already answered for me, by the high compliment which has just been paid, and by the enthusiastic reception for which I am bound to thank them. Around me, at this moment, stand the men of spirit, intelligence and property, who twice elected me to represent this noble county—who carried me in triumph through the summer's heat and the winter's snow, and who stand prepared, when occasion requires, to secure my election again.—(Cheers, and cries of Yes—to-morrow.)

Though highly appreciating your confidence, I yet think that the time has arrived when a few shot thrown into the enemy's camp may afford you some amusement, and teach them a useful lesson. A regular manufactory of defamation exists in Halifax—a branch of the business is carried on here in Amherst. Funds are subscribed to send the Colonist newspaper broad cast over the country, and half a dozen unscrupulous fellows supply weekly libels for its pages. Twenty persons have told me that the paper is regularly sent to them by unknown hands, without orders, or the payment of a farthing. Yet poor, innocent Mr. Dickey, who has nothing to do with this manufactory of course, who, for a £5 note, would worry any poor man in a witness box, or abuse any man in the county, is so thin skinned, that he summons two liberal publishers into Cumberland, for daring to comment upon false evidence, and lays the damage to his injured reputation at £2000. (Laughter.) Well, I think I have been pretty well abused by Mr. Dickey's friends and fellow labourers, and yet I will take five and twenty pounds, nay, I am not sure that I will not take five and twenty shillings, for all the damage done to me, and give a receipt in full.—I will go further—I will do my best to pour oil into the wounds which the Liberal Printers have inflicted, and give Barry Dickey the money.—(Roars of laughter.)

But what has become of those great libel trials? Can any body tell what has become of the Court, and of the Jury, of the causes tried, and of the verdicts given? How does it happen that Cumberland is the only county where such things occur? and here they have occurred more than once I am told. How does it happen that Cumberland is generally selected when a libel is to be tried, or a Liberal Printer is to be punished? [Here a paper was handed to Mr. Howe] A friend tells me that a young gentleman is taking notes—I am glad of it, there will be something worth reporting before I am done.

The county is not much honored by the distinction conferred upon it. This Jury Box of yours is a curious piece of furniture; sometimes what ought to be in it cannot be found, and then, we are told that something has been discovered in it which ought not to be there. Signor Blitz has a wonderful box, into which he sometimes

breaks an egg, and then pulls out of it a cat or a rabbit. But his box is nothing to the magical box which is kept here in Amherst. I do not say who is to blame, yet blame rests somewhere for these disgraceful irregularities. But may we not enquire how it happens that the defects were never discovered till Mr. Dickey found himself face to face with the two Liberal Printers? A whole term passed over last Spring with the same Jury lists. All that of course goes for nothing. Numerous causes were tried this term: they go for nothing. There can be no trials in October or January, till a new list is formed, and who is to pay Plaintiffs and Defendants for a year's delay? Who is to compensate Jurymen for the time that has been wasted? Suppose that a poor fellow had been hanged in the Spring, it appears to me that he would now have a good action for damages against somebody.—(Laughter.) For one thing, however, we ought to thank Providence—that the time has gone by when a Jury can be packed in Cumberland—for that assurance we ought to be grateful, and the conviction of the fact should make us cheerful for the rest of the afternoon.

Benjamin Franklin, who did not like the long graces at dinner, once irreverently advised his father, when he was corning down some beef, to say grace over the barrel by way of saving time. Though there is not much resemblance between the Tories and good beef, for some of the half-fed lawyers and scribblers, who are always abusing me, have very little of it upon their bones, I like to treat them after Franklin's fashion. I cannot spare time, from the pressure of public business, to answer every lie they write and tell, but once in a while, *when they have got a barrel full*, as they have just now, *I like to say grace over the whole*. I have no taste for small Caffre wars, with nameless adversaries, who fire out of the bush, and by whom there is very little honour or glory to be got even if you slew them by the dozen. There is not one of these Colonist Caffres whose hiding place I do not know, and whom I could not smoke out any day of the week, but I prefer to let them blaze away, taking care, however, as the old shoemaker did with his boys, to flog them once in a while, to let them know that they have a master. I caught two of these people, presenting a lying petition to the House of Assembly last winter, and I gave it to them to their hearts content—a third came before a Committee of the House, and lied, in a matter of millions, as though he was earning a guinea fee at the Bar, and verily he got and is getting his reward. (Great laughter.)

A few specimens will serve to show the unscrupulous character of the foul system of defamation which the Tory scribblers carry on. Hardly had the winter Election terminated when it was roundly asserted in the Colonist, day after day, for months, that I had drawn from the Treasury, by the connivance of the Receiver General, and in violation of law, £500 to pay the expenses of that election. This barefaced lie, made out of whole cloth, without the shadow of a foundation, was circulated into every hole and corner of Cumberland, by the little knot of worthies who cluster about Amherst. Not a man of them believed it, but what then? If they could make others believe it, they might deceive the constituency and damage my reputation. Not only was this charge false, but it was known to be so by at least fifty men in Halifax, and fifty more in Cumberland. Those men were cognisant of the fact that the Liberals of Halifax subscribed and paid every six-pence of the cost of that election, the money being remitted to, and disbursed by a committee, here in Amherst. My own personal expenses, amounting to about £35, the Liberals of Halifax, would have paid also, if I had let them. Who doubts, then, had I chosen to prosecute the publisher of this falsehood that I would have obtained a verdict. But what then? The Colonist is printed by a poor cadaverous creature, who drinks like a fish, who is not worth six-pence in the world, but who has a white liver, a red head, and is awfully pitted with the small-pox. Suppose heavy damages awarded, he would go to jail and swear out, and even if he were sent to the Penitentiary, the real authors of the slander would go unpunished. I prefer, therefore, in my own good time, and after my own fashion, to deal with the authors of these libels, and let the poor printer, who is merely earning his bread, go unscathed. Before passing on to lie the second, I may observe, that even the Muses are pressed into the service of the Tories, to give variety to falsehood. Miss Day, of the great Firm of Day & Martin, once boasted that her father kept a Poet. The Editors of the Colonist keep one or two, and it is said that the verses are manufactured by young ladies. If so, we may charitably hope that they are only kept for poetical purposes. (*Roars of laughter.*)

I come now to the old stale story of the Excise. While I held that office I collected £40,000 of the public money. In six weeks my accounts for all this money were completed and lodged in the Treasury—on the very day they were certified to be correct, the few hundred pounds remaining in my hands were paid over; and, from that day to this, my bitterest enemies, with every disposition, have never been able to discover an error to the extent of a sixpence in my accounts, or to surcharge me with a single pound. Now, let me ask, suppose that some of the Amherst lawyers had collected £40,000 of your money, do you believe that the accounts would have been as correct or the whole amount so promptly paid? (Cries of No—we would never have seen the half of it.) Let me put another question? Andrew Strange Dewolf was Chairman of the committee to whom my accounts were submitted. Does any man doubt that he would have found errors if he could, or surcharged me if he dared? He could do neither, but what he could do, was to lend his name to the slanders of the Colonist while I was in England. Fortunately for me Mr. McLellan, of Londonderry, was not absent. McLellan was a member of the committee of Public Accounts. He at once explained the facts, and did me justice. He did more, he publicly charged Mr. Dewolf, who was my successor in the Excise office, with striking a false balance, and presenting his own accounts to the committee in a form so inaccurate that they had to be returned to be corrected. Of this matter, personally, I know nothing, but if McLellan's statement be true, then Mr Dewolf, who is very fond of the bible you know, should remember that woe is denounced in it against those who strike a false balance.

Let me turn your attention now to another view of this subject. The whole charge against me is, that I retained a few hundred pounds of the public money in my hands for eight or ten weeks, while my accounts were being made up and examined. The Post Office accounts are rarely completed in less than three months after the close of the year. In the good old Tory times the Custom House accounts were never laid on the table of the House till towards the end of the session—mine were completed in half that time, and yet I am charged with delay. But, if holding £600 of the public money in my hands for eight or ten weeks be a great sin, I am prepared to show you that I erred in very good company. The Tories boast a good deal of their "Princely Houses," let us see how some of these overheld the public money while I was collector of Excise. I omit the names, but shall read from my letter book of that period. On the the 15th of April I was compelled to address this note to one of them:

Mr. Howe begs to direct Messrs. ———'s attention to bonds, due at the Excise office (£652), and hopes they will be kind enough to pay some of the oldest of them at their earliest convenience.

15th April, 1843.

Nothing having been paid till the 10th of June, on that day I wrote this note:

June 10, 1843.

GENTLEMEN,—On the 15th of April the Collector of Excise called Messrs. ———'s attention to some bonds, some three overdue. Nothing having been paid by Messrs. ———, the

Collumer, in enclosing the ticket for this month, feels it his duty to again urge upon them the propriety of paying the amount without further delay.

Not a sixpence was paid till the 8th of July, when I was compelled to write a more formal demand. It is a curiosity worthy the special notice of those who prate to us every day about overholding the public money:

Office of Impost and Excise, 8th July, 1843.

GENTLEMEN,—On the 15th of April and 10th of June I wrote to you, calling your attention to certain bonds sometime overdue at this office. No reply having been sent to either of my notes, and no money having been paid in, I am reluctantly compelled to hand to you a statement of the amounts due, with the dates of the bonds:

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1841. | | | | | | | |
| June 5, | £92 | 0 | 4 | Drawbacks, | £3 | 10 | 5 |
| Oct. 28, | 219 | 18 | 8 | " | 83 | 13 | 5 |
| Nov. 25, | 127 | 19 | 4 | " | 10 | 3 | 9 |
| Dec. 16, | 39 | 5 | 0 | " | 10 | 1 | 3 |
| 1842. | | | | | | | |
| Jan. 28, | 76 | 11 | 4 | | | | |
| Feb. 11, | 76 | 11 | 4 | | | | |
| March 23, | 75 | 8 | 0 | | | | |
| June 10, | 43 | 3 | 6 | | | | |
| Aug. 11, | 34 | 2 | 6 | | | | |
| Sept. 3, | 12 | 10 | 0 | | | | |
| Sept. 22, | 36 | 0 | 8 | | | | |
| Nov. 1, | 17 | 10 | 0 | | | | |
| Dec. 16, | 19 | 14 | 8 | | | | |
| | £869 | 19 | 10 | | | | |

From the above you will perceive that there are thirteen bonds on which payments are due—*that eight of them should have been discharged in full at the end of last quarter*, and *that no cash has been paid on any of them within a period of more than two years*. Under these circumstances, it will become my painful duty, if the amount due is not paid in the course of next week, to hand over the bonds to the law officers of the Crown.

I have, &c.,

Messrs. ———.

Here, then, was a Tory house, whose relatives and friends are weekly scribblers in the Colonist, and who are shocked when a Liberal holds a few hundred pounds, while his accounts are being closed and examined, who actually overheld £869 of the public money for upwards of two years, and never paid a farthing.

Down to the 11th of December not a pound had been paid, as you will see by this note:

OFFICE OF IMPOST AND EXCISE, 11th Dec., 1843.

GENTLEMEN—

I beg again to remind you of the various Bonds in 1841 still unpaid at the Excise Office. I cannot discharge my duty and leave these any longer uncollected. I have &c.,

When I left the office this money was still due; and such was the system by which thousands upon thousands of pounds were overheld from the improvement of the country, by people who lecture us upon punctuality, and talk about Howe's misdeeds in the Excise.

Take another specimen or two:

Office of Impost and Excise, 8th July, 1843.

GENTLEMEN,—I beg to hand you below a list of bonds due at this office. The earliest of these should have been discharged in November last, and three others in the March and June quarters. As no payments have been made on the ten bonds enumerated in this list since I assumed the charge of this office, I am reluctantly compelled to request that the amount now due may be paid in the course of next week.

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1841. | | | | | | | |
| Nov. 27, | £167 | 14 | 0 | Drawbacks, | £3 | 2 | 6 |
| 1842. | | | | | | | |
| March 22, | 75 | 0 | 0 | | | | |
| April 29, | 175 | 1 | 8 | | | | |
| June 24, | 363 | 7 | 4 | " | 26 | 14 | 4 |
| July 29, | 153 | 17 | 0 | | | | |
| Aug. 5, | 22 | 14 | 2 | | | | |
| Sep. 30, | 95 | 2 | 8 | | | | |
| Oct. 10, | 72 | 5 | 4 | | | | |
| Nov. 30, | 154 | 16 | 0 | | | | |
| Dec. 29 | 62 | 10 | 0 | | | | |
| | £1251 | 10 | 2 | | | | |

I have, &c.,

The Collector of Import and Excise will be obliged by Messrs. ———, taking up the three Bonds, dated in March, April and May, 1842.

July 26, 1843.

Such was the state of the Excise when I went into it; and do you wonder that the Tories battled with all their might to prevent me getting a peep behind the scenes? While these "primely houses" spread their peacock plumage to the sun, they did not want me to see how very bare their rumps were, or how frail were the limbs that sustained the stately apparitions. This advantage flowed, however, from my short sojourn in the Revenue office: the system of bonds was abolished, and cash payments substituted, by which the country has got the benefit of some thousands of duties, which the consumer had long since paid, but which many of the merchants systematically overheld, year by year. Is it in human nature to expect that these people can forget or forgive the person who broke up this nice little preserve? Who would deny to them the daily luxury of abusing him in the Colonist? But you will probably agree with me that, with the exposure which I have just made of them before the country, it will be common prudence, if not common decency, to say as little as possible about the Excise. They had better, as the Scotch say, "let that flea stick by the wa'." (Cheers and laughter.)

I come now to what the Tories call the Safe stories, and in approaching them I am reminded of an old play, written by Monk Lewis, called the Iron Chest. In that play a great scoundrel, Sir Edward Mortimer, tries to fasten a crime upon an innocent person—is caught in his own trap, and punished for his depravity. In this new drama of the Iron Chest, the Tories, before I am done with them, are not likely to fare much better. You know that, until very recently, they had the control of all the registry offices in the province. There were 18 or 20 of them. Half the fees were drawn from the officers who did the duty in all the counties, and went into the pocket of my predecessor in office, Sir Rupert George, who did nothing but take the money, and who had a salary of £1000 a year for doing the duty which I do for £700, besides. About £600 a year, thus drawn from the earnings of the people, were absorbed by this officer, in addition to his salary. This extravagance, you will bear in mind, the men who now oppose the present government, and abuse me in the newspapers, upheld, defended, and maintained, until the liberals drove them out of office.

During the century that they had the control of this fund, it must have amounted to at least £25,000. While they consumed this enormous sum, they made no provision for the safe custody and preservation of the Records in a single county. They bought no Iron Chests, or Fire Proof Safes, to protect the Public Records. Now imagine the confusion and misery that must have resulted from the burning down of a Registry office in a single county. But what did the Tories care for all this, they pocketed the fees for a century, and never bought a Safe. When I went into the Secretary's office and Sir Rupert George went out, an arrangement was made, for his convenience, by which my first clerk undertook to do the duty, paying £300 sterling to Sir Rupert until the Registry Act should pass, it being understood that any surplus, over and above the cost of doing the work, should be at the disposal of the Government.

During the three years that this work was done in my office, Sir Rupert George, who was in England all the time, received about £1000—the expenses were paid, and a surplus of £615 remained, which was paid over to me as Treasu

ser of the Casual Revenue. Now, bear in mind that, for any oversight or care of this branch of the public service which devolved upon me, I have never received one farthing. When the Registry Act passed, it authorized the Government to appropriate this surplus to provide an Iron Chest or Fire Proof Safe for every County in the Province. It was found, however, that these could not be made in Nova Scotia under a cost of £100 each or £2000 for the whole. Estimates were obtained from the States, and the price was $500 each or £2500, for the whole. The Government hesitated at incurring so large a liability, having only £615 in hand. In the mean time I was sent to England on the Railway delegation, where I remained from November to April. When my work was done I bethought me of the Safes. I had no instructions about them, but finding that they could be got on advantageous terms, I ordered them on my own responsibility. Seventeen of them were shipped in the autumn and arrived towards the end of the season, amounting to £721 sterling, or £900 currency. You will perceive that I had not Registry Fees enough to pay this amount, but, as the Legislature was to meet shortly, I knew the balance would be voted. Before this could be done my election was set aside, and you know that I only returned to town a few days before the close of the session. Having handed the Invoice and Registry accounts to Mr. Fraser before I left, it was not till after the close of the session that I found that no provision had been made for the Safes. In the meantime I remitted £500 sterling, or £625 currency (a trifle over the amount of Registry Fees in my hands) to the person from whom I had made the purchase. Feeling that the balance ought to be paid from some fund, and not knowing exactly what it was, as the account laid on the table of the house had not been returned to me, I wrote to my agent in London to call and adjust it. This was done by his own acceptance, and the amount charged against the Fees of Office in the account of that year. A gentleman who called upon me for this balance was informed of the order given, and the next Steamer brought me a receipt, and a letter of thanks from the gentleman from whom the Safes were purchased. Out of this simple transaction the lying scribblers for the Colonist have manufactured a cartload of defamation.—But let me contrast my dealings with this branch of the public service with those of the men who find fault.

They had the Registry Offices for a century under their charge, and in all that time, though they pocketed £25,000 of fees, they never saved a shilling for the public, or bought a single safe to preserve the records of the Country. I had charge of them for three years only, and, at the end of that time, the cost of doing the work was paid—£1000 was handed over to Sir Rupert George—£615 was saved—and a Fire Proof Safe sent into every County in the Province; and yet not a single shilling of these Fees has gone into my pocket. What do you think of the Colonist Scribblers, and their play of the Iron Chest, now. (Cries of Shame—shame.)

But let me take another view of this matter. The charge is that I overheld the public money in a shameful way. Now in the first place there was not much to overhold—only £615. Of this money I had the legal custody, till the Registry Act passed, and then it was specifically appropriated to the service for which I applied it. If it lay in my custody for a time, I took good care of it, and have honestly accounted for it. But it is a great sin for Joe Howe to have £615 of Registry Fees in his custody for a few months or years, but it was no sin for Rupert George to pocket that amount every year, for doing no perceptible public service. George got £1000 during the three years that Howe was managing these matters, and getting nothing but abuse for his pains—yet Howe is a great rogue, and George an upright man, whom the Tories delight to honor. (Laughter and cheers.)

Take another view. Had I not gone to England these Safes would have cost the country £2000. By going, and by exercising my own judgment, and incurring responsibility, which, when I can serve my country, I am never afraid to do, I got them for £1070, so that in that single transaction I saved to the Province £930, a sum sufficient to cover the whole cost of the two Delegations to England and of the Delegation to Canada besides.—(Cheers.)

But it is said that I held this £615 some months longer than I ought. But who complains? Not the man I dealt with, as we shall see presently, and now let me shew you how little reason the public have to complain. I went to England upon public business in November, without any provision being made for paying my expenses. I did not get back till May, and in the meantime had expended £500 sterling of my own funds while attending to your best interests. This money was not repaid to me until the following July.—Now, then, mark this fact. While out of pocket to this extent, I did not hesitate, upon my own credit and responsibility, to purchase property for the public to the value of another £1000. The Country got the benefit of my care and forethought, and of my funds and credit, to the amount of £1600, while I had only £615 Registry Fees in my possession. Had these Safes been ordered through a Mercantile House the Commissions alone would have been at least £60. I charged no commission; and yet out of such a transaction as this, in which the country got all the benefit, and I got nothing but the trouble, the miserable creatures, who live by defamation, have manufactured and circulated a cartload of lies. Let me now read to you a letter received from the gentleman from whom the Safes were purchased. [Here Mr. Howe read the letter which was read in the Assembly—concluding thus—"Hoping to be honored with your future commands, and praying that the blessing of Almighty God may rest upon you, I am, &c."]

Now, my friends, I think I have demolished the three grand Batteries of the enemy, and need not trouble myself or you any further about the Treasury, the Excise or the Safe Stories. Though the Father of Lies himself could not have exercised more devilish ingenuity than my enemies have done in perverting and misrepresenting simple and honorable transactions, they will not hereafter find many believers in the noble County of Cumberland.

In other Countries no man dreads of meddling with a public man's private affairs, or pecuniary transactions. Ever since 1842, now nearly eleven years, mine have been dragged before the public with but little delicacy and discretion. By proclaiming me a bankrupt, and blowing on my character and credit, my enemies have sought to make me one. They have failed. I have defied them and still defy them. They did their worst when I was surrounded with liabilities not my own. They may do their worst to the end of the chapter. But, how few of those who have carried on this hideous warfare, could have stood such storms so well. How many of their "princely Houses" have collapsed and shrunk since 1842. If I were to count up the liabilities of Tory Bankrupts during the eleven years that they have been laboring, without success, to make me one, I think they would not fall far short of £100,000—one half, at least, of the amount having been taken out of the pockets of the

Liberals. Take a single specimen. A year ago, when Mr. Fulton and I were running the winter elections, we found, in all corners of the County, threatening letters from one of the Princely Houses, addressed to all its debtors. A Blacksmith in Parrsboro' showed me one of them, in which he was told that if he voted for or supported Howe, he should be ruined. The Blacksmith acted with spirit and independence, and, with ruin impending over him, he voted as he pleased. He is still working away, and will get above the world. But, in a few months the Tory trader who had threatened him had failed for £15,000—having cheated good Liberals out of about half the amount—forged paper upon his bosom friend to a large extent, and fled out of the country, leaving upon his books the record of several hundred pounds, of other people's money, spent in an Election, trying to put down that great scamp—Joe Howe. (Roars of laughter.)

Now I do not pretend to be more honest or punctual than others. I may say of myself, however, that I was twelve years in business, dealing with thousands of people. During all that time I never had five disputed accounts. I never oppressed any body or put a debtor in Jail. How many of your Parrsborough or Pugwash Traders, or Amherst Attornies, can say as much? When the claims of principle, and of country, forced me into office, and compelled me to devote all my time to public affairs, I had upwards of £3000 of debts scattered over the country, the greater part of which is not collected to this day: a larger sum than some of the scribbling Attornies who defame me, have ever earned or ever will earn by any honest means. But, Mr. Chairman, suppose that I had served my opponents as they have served me. Suppose, when in England, or in Canada, or in the States, I had taken the trouble to enquire how much some of our "Princely Houses" owed there. Suppose, when I have known their notes lying over by thousands in Halifax, I had proclaimed the fact to all the world, I think that the credit of some of them would not have been worth much either at home or abroad. Looking round Cumberland, let me ask you how many of the persons who have dealt with the griping Traders of Parrsborough or Pugwash, or with the petifogging Attornies of Amherst, ever invoked "the blessings of Heaven" upon them, as the Englishman did upon me, when all was over. (Here a man in the crowd cried out—"they have skinned me to the bone.") Mr. Howe continued. I hope that the young gentleman who is taking notes will take that down. Yes, poor fellow, but you are not the only one they have skinned.—Travel the Township of Parrsborough—ride up and down the Wallace and Pugwash Rivers—see the Farms that have been seized upon the River Philip—and hear, not the blessings, but "the curses, loud and deep," that are to be heard in those regions. Peter Pindar gives a humorous account of how the Overseers of a certain Parish eat a child.—What a tale might be written of the mode in which a Pugwash Trader and an Amherst Attorney eat a Farm. Extortionate prices swelling the account—compound interest and law expenses leading to a Judgment or a Mortgage. Then the life of bondage—of contumely, and insult, and political servility—and then Foreclosure or ejectment—exile or the Jail. Suppose that I were to do such things as these. Suppose I was living here in Amherst, and when a poor man came to borrow £100 I was to take a Judgment for that amount, take £10 out for discount and £5 more for the Judgment, giving him only £85 Such things are done here in Amherst it is said, and I say that the fellows who do them would rob a Church. Suppose I were to do them, I think the Scribblers in the Colonist might be very eloquent. But suppose that I were to buy an old Farm, not worth £50, find a copper mine in it which had no existence, and sell it for £5000. Or suppose that I had organized a Company with a capital of £500,000 to work five shillings worth of copper, and came pretty near pocketing a couple of hundred thousand pounds by the transaction. Suppose, while in England, instead of buying Safes to protect your Records, I had spent my time, and exhausted my ingenuity, in such exploits as these, no doubt I should have passed for a clever fellow, and been very much admired by the scribbling Attornies who write for the Colonist. Who knows but my health might have been drunk at the Dickey Dinner with loud applause? (Great laughter.) Suppose that I had wanted a pleasure trip to England, and had got up a cock and bull story about a great Estate, and had wrung from poor people their hard earnings to pay my way, perhaps the Tories of Cumberland might have assembled, and given me a Dinner themselves. (Cheers and laughter.)

I turn now with pleasure from mere personal defamation to the general charges which the Opposition bring against the Government.—You hear it proclaimed from day to day that it has ruined the Province. You look round upon a smiling and prosperour country, and know that charge to be groundless. Never, within my memory, was Nova Scotia more prosperous. The breadth of cultivation is every where extending. New Farm Houses, Barns and Mills, are going up in all directions. The internal trade is active—new Ships are building all round the coast, and our mercantile marine is profitably employed.—Bad crops have but quickened the industry of the people. Prices are high, wages good, and the people cheerful. Where do the Tories find the evidences of ruin and decay? Not in Cumberland I am sure. Not in the Eastern Counties, from which I hear the most gratifying accounts. Not in Yarmouth, which launches a new vessel every week and finds employment for them all. Not in Kings, where a gentleman told me the other day, that money was so abundant, that he knew of £8 or £10,000 lying in that single county which could not be invested at 5 per cent.—Not in Halifax, where new shops are being opened, and new houses are being built in every street. There, as every where else, public improvement keeps pace with private enterprise. Look at the edifice behind us, as large as all the old Hotels put together. In the Capital a new Barrack is being built—the Citadel advances—a new Market is in course of erection. A new Court House and Lunatic Asylum are already provided for, and the Common has been more embellished within the last two years than in half a century before. Let us hear no more then of the Tory twaddle about ruin and decay.

But it is said that you are living under a tyrannical Government. This I take leave to deny. There is not a man from end to end of the Province who can complain that his civil and religious rights are denied to him. There is not a man, however poor, of any sect or denomination, who has not free access to every officer, from the Lieutenant Governor downwards. There is not a man or woman—a blackman or an Indian, whose complaint is not promptly investigated—whose written or verbal communication is not treated with courtesy and respect. Long may such tyranny continue in Nova Scotia.

Turn to the Public Departments and you will find a new spirit breathed into them all. A few years ago you had no audit of accounts—even the Treasurer audited his own. Now the inspection is perfect as it is prompt. Formerly a farmer would wait half a day to get a Road Account examined, with his team standing in the street. Now, no man who enters the Province Building, leaves it till his accounts are audited, and the cheque for his money is in his hand. Formerly your statistics were imperfect, and the returns of your trade of little value. New voluminous returns, showing the condition of every branch of industry, are laid upon the table of the House. With the lowest tariff in the world our revenue is steadily increasing, while new Free Ports have been opened in all directions giving additional facilities to Trade.

Look at the Post Office. A few years ago you paid 9d on a letter from Amherst to Halifax; 1s 6d on one sent from Halifax to Sydney; 2s 1d if it was sent to Montreal. Now you can send a letter all over the Province—all over British America, for 3d, and yet with this reduction of postage, since the Liberal Administration came into power, 46 new rides have been set up, and 75 new Post and Way Offices have been established, conferring upon numerous settlements, and upon many thousands of the people, the blessings of postal communication.

Look at the Land Offices. Formerly you had two, costing an enormous sum, and yet any man wishing to buy land had to travel to Halifax or Sydney with his money, and make another journey to obtain his grant. Your Deputy Surveyors gave no Bonds, and often pocketed the money which ignorant people paid them. Now one Department does the work at a moderate expense, and in every County there is a Deputy, under Bonds, to whom money may be safely paid, and through whose hands the Grants, when perfected, are delivered to the people.

If you turn to the Board of Works you will find a number of miscellaneous services—Sable Island—the Penitentiary—Light Houses—Public Buildings, and Vessels for the Protection of the Revenue and the Fisheries, which were formerly managed or mismanaged by irresponsible Commissioners, all combined under one methodical and responsible Department, the work being better done at very much less expense. Of my own Department I will only say, that a Tory Secretary, who represented no constituency, formerly cost the Country about £1800 a year. Now the unfortunate wight who stands before you does all his work for £700, finding time to do much that he never thought of doing, and representing the fine County of Cumberland besides.

But, it may be said, what have you done for Cumberland. Reflect, for a moment, how little time Mr. Fulton and myself have had to do anything. The Extra Session was devoted to the Railroad alone. During nearly the whole of the Session of 1852 we were running a second Election. We have had but one Session to mature any measure calmly. But have we done nothing? It used to be said, during the Elections—Oh! you will never see Howe's face again—he will never travel over the County and look at your Roads and Bridges. They knew little of me. Last summer I was twice in Cumberland, I rode over every part of the Township of Parrsboro, and through much of the Township of Amherst, and traversed the shore from Pugwash to Malagash. I have just returned from a circuit nearly as extensive, in which I have visited Point de Bute, Bay de Verte, Tidnish, River Philip, Leicester, Little River and the Pugwash. These rides I shall continue till I have the whole County in my head. Nor have these rambles been barren of results. For years had Cumberland paid Light Duties, and yet had not a Light House on either of her coasts. Now a new Light House at Parrsboro, built last year, sends its beams far out over the Bason of Mines, and we must have another at Pugwash by and bye. For twenty years a Bridge across the River Philip had been talked of by the people and promised by the Tories. They would have promised it for twenty years more. Fulton and I provided for it the very first Session that we represented the County together. Already are the Piers completed, and by the end of September the whole will be done. The House gave us £300—the Bridge will cost £1600, but before the end of Autumn we shall have the happiness to contemplate the finest public work ever constructed in the County, and which will connect all the thriving settlements on the Northern shore together in all time to come. (Cheers.) Yet we have not been unmindful of other parts of the County. Bent's Hill, the worst upon the Post Road, has been altered. A new line from Half-way River to Parrsboro has been surveyed, and, after this season we travel the Fullerton hills no more Next year we shall attack the Hills between Pugsley's and Macan. The whole coast line from Advocate Harbour to Colchester has been surveyed, and as soon as the River Philip Bridge is paid for we shall show you a new line on the Parrsboro shores. (Cheers.)

But, you may ask me—"What about the Railroad?" Well—I have no information to give, more than all the world has. I know that it has been said,—"Oh! Howe dare not come to Cumberland, now that his Railway policy has failed." But here I am, and neither afraid nor ashamed to defend any act I have done, and every word I have said in reference to the Railways. After all that has been written and said upon the subject—after all the phases it has assumed, is there a sane man in North America who will assert that my original scheme of borrowing the money at 3½ per cent., under the guarantee of the Imperial Government, and constructing the Railways as Government works, was not far superior to any other that has yet been proposed? If I failed to carry out that scheme, I am proud that, for two years I struggled to accomplish it with all my might, and with the sincerity of an honest conviction. But why did I fail? Is there a man here who blames me? Is there a man who does not feel that I failed, because the interests of powerful parties in England, who wanted to make money out of those roads, were opposed to the interests of the Provinces? (Cries of not one). You may remember that all through the summer and winter Elections—we were told—"Howe is going to ruin the Province with his Railway scheme." Mark, now, my scheme was to build them with money at 3½ per cent, and to let the people own them. That was to bring ruin on as all. I hold in my hand the Prospectus of the Canada Grand Trunk Railway Company. Now what have they published to all the world, after, we are told, careful surveys and estimates? Why that, made with money or Bonds, bearing interest at six per cent, the Grand Trunk Railway, which was to ruin us if made with money at 3½, will not only pay all expenses, but yield a clear profit of 11½ per cent. besides. Now, assume that statement to be true, and what are the inevitable conclusions—that, all the tales of mischief and ruin, to arise from making Railroads, spoken and published by the Opposition in 1851, 1852 and 1853, were baseless fabrications;

and that the motive was to put this 11½ per cent into their own pockets, that ought to have been a permanent source of Revenue, to the people of British America—lightening their taxation, and ultimately giving them Railroads as free as their common highways are now. (Cheers.) Yes, my friends, this was the motive, and when you calculate 11½ per cent on millions of money, besides Contractors profit, you need not seek far for the reasons which disturbed my policy in 1851.

The interests of a few members of Parliament, and rich Contractors in England, were on one side, and the interest of the Colonists on the other, and in such a case there was no great difficulty in giving two meanings to a despatch, or in telling a Nova Scotian with no seat in Parliament, or connexions or influence in England, that he had made a mistake.—Who doubts then, that down to 1852 my policy was sound, and who blames me that powerful combinations in England, and no fault of mine, caused it to miscarry? And what care I for the taunts and slanders of those recreant Nova Scotians, who combining with these speculators, against their country, hope to put some portion of the 11½ per cent into their own pockets? My defence of my conduct in 1852 is soon made. Hincks and Chandler came to Nova Scotia in that year to induce us to adopt the line by the valley of he St. John. I resisted that line as long as I could, and their line was subsequently condemned by the British Government, and pronounced impracticable by Mr. Jackson's Surveyors. They went to England, and you know well the reasons why I could not go.—They did the best they could for their several Provinces, and I have never blamed them for what they did. But, as Nova Scotia was unpledged by their arrangements, and had six months to review her position, I saw clearly that she could do better that she could, upon her own credit, and without any Imperial Guarantee, carry out her original policy, and make, control and own, her own Railroads. I saw also, that it was for the interest of all the Provinces to have competition, and to cheapen the cost of their public works. With this view I labored down to the middle of last session. When that session opened, the money was ready on the credit of the Province alone, to build all our Railroads. Contractors were ready to build them for 20 per cent less than New Brunswick and Canada were to pay.—In ten days the Bills might have been passed—in ten more the Contracts would have been signed, and 500 men might now have been upon the lines. Again—the interests of rich Contractors, and scheming Attornies, clashed with the interests of the Province, and united the Opposition to a man. I could have beaten them notwithstanding, had not one or two persons, calling themselves Liberals, conspired with the enemy to destroy our Bills, and to dash down the hopes and prospects of their own party, at the proudest moment of its political history. This work accomplished, the combined Opposition were powerless for good. They could neither form a Government nor build a Railroad. To secure a Party triumph, they promised that Mr. Jackson would build the three Roads, and pay us interest at 6 per cent for any Bonds the Province gave him.—I did not believe that he could do this—I don't believe it now, but the moment that his friends put that pledge in writing, we accepted it, and a compromise was the result. That compromise we shall stand by in good faith. If Mr. Jackson, or any body else, will form a Company, and construct the Railroads under the Act of Incorporation which has been passed, the government will give them every fair co-operation. But, should no Company be formed, the alternative Bills come into operation, and the Roads will be built as originally proposed. The day is far distant, my friends, when I shall be ashamed of my Railway policy, or afraid to discuss it in any part of Nova Scotia. Against fearful odds I have battled for the general interests, and if I have not done all that I wished, I have at least done all that I could. (Cheers, and cries of "that you have.")

I think, Mr. Chairman, that I have now disposed of every topic of importance, and although much curious matter remains behind, we have not daylight to discuss it. A great dinner took place here on the 4th of May last, at which I was plentifully bespattered. The report of the proceedings I never read till to-day. I put it into my box, on leaving town, and shall entertain you with a few of the richest passages. Dryden's account of Alexander Feast was nothing to it, but this was not a Feast to Alexander the great, but to Barry the little. Mr. Pineo, of Pugwash, presided, and spoke with his characteristic eloquence and moderation. The burthen of his discourse was, how Mr. Howe was going to ruin the Province, by making Railroads. Yet Mr. Pineo cannot find any body in the Province that I ever ruined, but I think I could find a good many in his part of the country, that have been ruined by buying rum and goods, at cent per cent, and getting into debt, and giving mortgages and judgements, until they were sold into bondage and treated like slaves. I cannot go over all the nonsense which Mr. Pineo talked on this occasion, and you know that it does not take him long to talk a good deal, but his assertion that Mr. Dickey "entirely cleared himself of the charges of misrepresentation" at the Bar of the House, I must flatly contradict. Those who ought to be the best judges, the members of the House, who heard his evidence, rejected both resolutions offered to exculpate Mr. Dickey, and as plainly as men could speak, declared the very reverse of what Mr. Pineo said at the dinner.

Let me now glance at Mr Dickey's own speech. I was amused with his assertion that he stipulated, before going to Portland, "that he should be allowed to bear his own expenses." What a pity it is that he did not make the same stipulation which he went to England to look after the Estate. (Roars of laughter.) "I did this said he, because I thought it the bounden duty of every man, who has made his money out of the people, to pay back an instalment now and then, when any public improvement demands the sacrifice." Well—it could not have cost more than £10 to go from Amherst to Portland and back, and this was a marvellously small instalment of all that Dickey has grubbed out of the County of Cumberland. In the Homeopathic system, medicine is given in infinitisimal doses—this was an infinitisimal dose indeed. To be sure it was followed by a grand flourish of trumpets, but I fear that the sinner who made restitution by such slow degrees would be a long time getting to Heaven.

Mr. Dickey makes great fun of the people of Halifax for preferring government Railways, and says "they have been fed upon government pap all their lives." Government pap, forsooth. Why there are thousands of people in Halifax, who hold no offices under Government—who are independent of it—who get no pap. Can he, or his connections, say the same? He holds an office under the very Government he assails—that of Judge of Probate, and it would be more be-

coming 'a him to stay at home, and attend to the be[illegible] of the widow and the fatherless, than to be spending his time in Halifax or Portland either. But he is not satisfied to take pap from Queen Victoria, but he must get some from Uncle Sam. His name figures in the Almanack as American Consul. Then his Father-in-law the Judge gets a good share of pap, and by his getting it, Dickey gets his practice. The whole family connection, about Amherst, here, hold some office or other, and yet the gentleman has the modesty to speak sneeringly of Government pap.

Mr. Dickey tells us, that after the Portland convention, "he made himself personally liable to Mr. Morton for exploring the line through Nova Scotia," and that the Attorney General neglected to pay the Bill, which was finally paid in New Brunswick. Now, if Barry Dickey was such a fool, after Robinson and Henderson, at a cost of many thousands of pounds, had surveyed the whole line through Nova Scotia, to order a new survey himself, without any authority from the Government or the legislature, he deserved to pay for it out of his own pocket, and the people of New Brunswick, if they have paid the Bill, should make him refund the money (Laughter.)

Speaking of his Bill of Incorporation, he says—" Had this been passed, it is only necessary to look across the borders to understand the position Nova Scotia would have been in." Well—New Brunswick has had a Company for two or three years, and when we look across the border now, what do we see? Three canvas tents, and a party of Surveyors, and nothing else. You may see the same sight on the River Philip to-morrow, so that after all my obstruction, Nova Scotia is just as far ahead as New Brunswick at this very hour. Speaking of the Northern Line, Dickey boasts: 'I asserted that neither Canada nor New Brunswick would ever consent to build that northern line.' But does not the silly fellow know that Canada and New Brunswick are going to build it? That the former has contracted to make it to Trois Pistoles—the latter up to Miramichi, while Mr. Jackson is at this moment negociating with the British Government, to obtain a sum of money, to fill up the gap between. 'I contended that the Northern line would not pay for 20 years,' says he, and my answer is—read the Prospectus of the Grand Trunk Company, which is to pay 11½ per cent.

In another part of his speech Dickey tells us that I pledged my head on the success of my policy, but have the audacity to keep it.—If I do, it is worth keeping, and that is more than can be said of some other heads I wot of. I seldom *lose my head*, but if I ever should, and Dickey finds it, he wont find a lying tongue in it, that calls wood "stone, and brick, and tubular iron." (Great laughter.)

We are told in another place, that if it had not have been for his earnest entreaties, Mr. Jackson would not have come into Nova Scotia, or made us any offers at all. This is rich. Fancy the picture. Barry on his knees pleading for his country, and the great man slowly relenting, and consenting, in consideration of Dickey's humiliation, to forgive poor Nova Scotia for having begotten Howe. But this, like the brick and stone station houses, is all a fiction. For, long before Mr. Jackson met Mr. Dickey at St. John, I had a Telegraph from him, to say that he would come on, and make an offer for the whole 300 miles.—There is another passage, equally rich, and quite as veracious. "Just fancy," exclaimed Dickey, to the wondering auditory, who were eating his dinner, "the absurdity of sending all the way to Cumberland for somebody to explain what an iron tubular bridge is." Absurd enough, if such a thing were done. But who sent for him? He came of his own accord, and, for three weeks, volunteered to instruct every body who would listen to him about the marvellous contents of the New Brunswick Specification. At Mr. Johnston's request, and solely out of deference to that gentleman, he was permitted to come before the committee. The statements he made there deceived every man who heard him, but me. I had heard him before—had taken the measures of his truthfulness and of his capacity, and, though I might, if I wanted an Ayrshire Calf, or a good Tub of Butter, send to Cumberland for it, I hope nobody here suspects me of having sent all the way to Amherst for B. Dickey to tell me anything I did not know.

One passage of this marvellous oration, and one passage only, deserves a serious notice.—It is that in which he declares that all his efforts would have been fruitless but for the Lieutenant Governor, by which he would have it inferred that Sir Gaspard Le Marchant and himself had been working together, for the salvation of the Province, against the constitutional advisers of the former who were about to ruin it. If this had been true, Mr. Dickey should be the last to proclaim the fact. 'What would offend the eye in a good picture the painter casts discreetly in the shade.' If the Lieutenant Governor had committed an indiscretion, those whom he honored with his confidence, should not have allowed their vanity to override the obligations which that confidence imposed. Now, Mr Chairman, it is but justice to the Lieutenant Governor to say, that, whatever his private opinions may have been, he left his Council free to carry out the Railway policy to which they were pledged before his Excellency came into the country, if they could. He gave them every fair play that they could constitutionally claim, until they were defeated by their own friends, and matters came to a dead lock. Then it was, that it became His Excellency's duty—a duty which he discharged with tact and firmness—to moderate the heats of party—to mediate between contending interests, and to endeavor to make all parties sensible that the welfare of the Province ought not to be sacrificed at the shrine of faction. He succeeded. The compromise was the result; but what had Dickey, who was not in either house, to do with it? And you may remember that Mr. Johnston, if his friends had gone with him, would have destroyed the fruits of that compromise, when the Bills had reached the final stage.

Mr. Chairman, I am now done, and I must apologise for keeping you sitting, and our good friends, wanting, so long. With many thanks for all your kindness, I must bid you all good night. Before I do so, however, there is one charge which the Tories bring against me to which I may as well plead guilty at once. They complain that I am fond of the Ladies, and kiss the girls sometimes as I ramble about. But who can ride over this county of Cumberland, and not have almost an invincible inclination to commit such small trespasses as these? Old as I am, and the snowfall of time is descending upon me, I confess that I am very like the Cornish minor that Bond Head tells about—Did you ever, said the enthusiastic Dutchman, as he stood on one of the most majestic slopes of the Andes, see anything so lovely, so magnificent? Yes, yer Honor, the Cornishman replied—'them things that we left at home, what do wear caps and aprons.' So I say, when I gallop over Cumberland—the mountains are fine—the marshes are rich—the grindstones are clear grit, and the men are sturdy, true hearted and intelligent fellows—but the women, after all—'those things which do wear caps and aprons,' they are the pride of the county. There may be an ugly one found, occasionally, on the Tory side of politics, but if there is, I do not regard myself bound, by any extreme views of political obligation, to kiss her. (Shouts of laughter.) Well, we are about to part, and before we go let us give 'three cheers for the women of Cumberland.'

These were given, and three more, at Mr. Howe's request, for Mr. Fulton, when the Chairman left the Chair and the people peacefully dispersed.

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